

Fall 8-15-2003

ENG 4850-001: Indian Colonialism: Renunciation and Power

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English 4850: Indian Colonialism: Renunciation and Power Fall 2003

Jyoti Panjwani
Office: Ch 3576
Phone: 581-3615
Office hrs: TR 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description:

The close connection between 'renunciation' and 'power' is one of the most discussed themes in traditional/classical Indian literature. This connection assumed even a greater significance during the colonial period in India, also known as the period of Indian Renaissance, that was marked by a revival of Indian traditional values to (i) intensify the fervor of the Indian nationalist movement and (ii) to use them as a weapon to fight the British colonial regime. In this course, through the study of selected literary, theoretical and historical writings of the colonial period (late 19th century-mid 20th century), we will try to configure the inter-relatedness and/or the counter-relatedness of the themes of 'power' and 'renunciation' in the socio-political ideologies, that were formulated to fight the colonial rule of the British. Some of the questions that we will discuss are: What do the terms 'power' and 'renunciation' mean in the context of traditional Indian culture? How were they interpreted in the colonial period? What kind of power is linked to renunciation? What kind of political action was generated through the principle of renunciation in the colonial period? Finally, and more importantly, no discourse on Indian colonialism is complete without connecting the political struggle for an independent Indian nation to that of Indian women's emancipation because the British rationale for colonization was tied, in part, to the 'woman's question'. Through the writings of Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Premchand, and Partha Chatterjee, we will try to see how the themes of 'power' and 'renunciation' are related in creating the concepts of the 'new' emancipated Indian woman and nation.

Course Requirements:

One class presentation on a single topic or work- 15%
One mid-term paper, 5-7 pages- 30%
One final paper, 8-10 pages: 40%
Active Preparation and Class Participation- 15%

Texts Required:

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. Anandamath
Easwaran: Bhagavadgita
Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (eds.). Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History
Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth
Premchand: Deliverance and Other Stories
Rabindranath Tagore: The Home and the World
---. The Red Oleanders
---. Gitanjali

Course Policies:

Discussion (participation) is an important component of this course. Your presence in class is important for everyone, but especially for you. More than three unexcused absences will bring your final grade down by 1%. Three late appearances equal one unexcused absence. Papers are due at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. For each day that the paper is late, the letter grade will fall by one full grade: an 'A' essay due on Friday will be a 'F' by next Thursday. ALWAYS MAKE COPIES AND BACK UP YOUR WORK!

Plagiarism Policy (English Department):

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism -- "The appropriation or imitation of the language, of ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) -- has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

Information for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Co-ordinator of the office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Tentative Syllabus.**Week 1**

8/26- Introduction to the Course

8/28- Bhagavadgita, Chs 1-3

Week 2

9/2- continued, Chs 4-6

9/4- continued, Chs 7-9

Week 3

9/9- continued, Chs 10-11

9/11- Anandamath

Week 4

9/16- continued

9/18- continued

Week 5

9/23- "The Chess Players" from Deliverance and Other Short Stories

9/25- continued, Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth

Week 6

9/30- continued

10/2- continued, "Gandhi": Film by Richard Attenborough

Week 7

10/7- continued

10/9- "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question" by Partha Chatterjee from Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History

Week 8

10/14- continued, Mid-term paper due at the beginning of the class.

10/16- The Home and the World

Week 9

10/21- continued,
10/23- continued, The Red Oleanders

Week 10

10/28- continued,
10/30- Selections from Gitanjali

Week 11

11/4- conferences for the class-presentations and the final research paper
11/6- continued

Week 12

11/11- conferences
11/13- continued

Week 13

11/18- Class-Presentations
11/20- continued

Week 14

12/2- Class-Presentations
12/4- continued

Week 15

12/9- Class-Presentations
12/11- Final Paper due, Review